



SECHS RESPONSES TO SCS

I: Students do not have complete schedules

Students were given hard copies of their schedules. Electronic versions, via PowerSchool were completed the last week of August. We did contact the PowerSchool team at the SCS district office and confirmed that this was not a problem. The team also confirmed, on the call with SCS officials yesterday, that our schedules were in compliance with all State requirements. Parent feedback this week has helped clarify that this concern is due to the unique nature of an early college high school, where, beginning in 11th grade, students take 4-5 courses per semester. Students and parents grew accustomed to 8 courses each semester during 9th and 10th grade.

II: There are significant staffing shortages

We were fully staffed on July 15, 2019. Unfortunately two key teachers resigned two weeks before school started and another key teacher, the day before school was to start. It is not easy to fill teaching positions at this critical time, but we developed a plan to utilize Proximity Learning for math classes until we are able to hire capable, certified teachers who are aligned to our school's culture and values. Proximity Learning has been rated as one of the top K-12 online education services in the nation, boasting the highest quality teachers, most innovative virtual classrooms, and the reputation as a flexible learning solution to both public and private school districts.

SECHS now has an English 3 teacher and is interviewing certified teachers to fill the remaining vacancy, English 2. SECHS has had a consistent long-term substitute for English 2, who is supervised by one of the SECHS instructional facilitators.

III: Some Students with IEPs are not receiving proper services

What has been done:

- Students have been identified, and files have been requested from previous schools as well as the Bond Building.
- A comprehensive training to staff about appropriate SPED accommodations was provided on 7/18/19
- It is documented that teachers have been given an IEP-At-A-Glance for all students with IEPs they serve (8/13/19; 8/21/19).
- Teachers have been trained on the Alternate Academic Diploma, and how to serve students working toward this end (8/21/19).
- Teacher meetings have been held to discuss delivery of inclusion services (8/29/19).
- Present levels of academic performance have been collected and documented using the KTEA 3 as well as STAR Reading and STAR Math.
- Transition assessments have been completed and documented using the Casey Life Skills Assessment.

- IEP/Re-evaluation meetings have been calendared for the year, and meeting invitations have been sent to parents at least 1 month prior to the meeting date with the exception of 2 students.
- IEP meetings have been held to discuss the most appropriate services for students.
- A meeting was held with the SWTCC Director of Student Disability Services to discuss students receiving accommodations in college classes (8/27/19).
- Parents have been contacted and have been sent Release of Information documents to sign so that plans can be written for students to receive accommodations in their college classes.

Moving Forward:

- Students will receive inclusion services for a full 90 minutes either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday and for 45 minutes on Fridays in English and Math (or as their IEP outlines) provided by 2-3 staff members through the end of the first semester.
- Students will receive intervention services for a full 90 minutes either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday Thursday and for 45 minutes on Fridays in Reading and Math (or as their IEP outlines) provided by one staff member.
- After the first semester, inclusion will be provided 45 minutes Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday and for 45 minutes on Fridays in English and Math (or as their IEP outlines).
- IEP Meetings will continue to be held to discuss the most appropriate services for students.

IV: Not all students will receive an Associate's Degree upon graduation

An Associate's Degree is an opportunity not a guarantee. Our mission is to enable scholars to prepare to earn a college degree and/or industry certification in a career field of their choice, and to transition into the workplace with the preparation and skills necessary to enjoy a successful career and a productive life. It is ultimately up to the student—and with support from the student's parent—whether the student leaves with an associate's degree. SECHS provides many supports, including after school tutoring and Accuplacer and ACT prep courses in students' schedules to help them prepare for the first hurdle in attaining an associate degree: earning a required score on the Accuplacer test so that Southwest Tennessee Community College will accept students into college-level courses.

We have begun implementation of this strategy by scheduling regular meetings between Advisors and students. These Advisors will have at least 3 one-on-one conversations with parents and students. Our school counselor will also complete transcript audits and has already begun meeting with each student about their trajectory.

V: Students have not been provided text books or course material for their college classes

Parents received a **school supply list** at Parent/Student Orientations on July 11th and 12th, on our school website beginning July 24th, via School Messenger on July 24th, and via the Welcome Back newsletter on August 2nd. These lists were based on the requirements of each teacher/professor.

Specifically regarding materials that SECHS provides students:

Textbooks for college classes. Given the different timelines of college scheduling and our own enrollment, we were not informed which books would need to be purchased for students. We assumed that professors would provide a syllabus that outlined which textbooks would be required for each class.

As students returned from their first day of college classes (8/26/19), they provided those syllabi in order to make us aware of required textbooks to purchase. Some textbooks were sold out/ not available at the college bookstore, so professors have let our students borrow their texts until class sets that we ordered arrive this week. We have communicated with the college to find ways that this does not occur in the future.

VI: Students are not escorted across the college campus

Part of life on campus is assuming personal responsibility for traveling to and from different locations. During the first two to three days of college classes (August 26-28), students were escorted to their college classes in order to familiarize them with campus geography and appropriate behaviors. With students leaving from up to 6 different classes and/or going to up to 6 different classes during any given passing period, it is not possible to chaperone all students. For this reason, we communicated to parents via School Messenger that although students have more freedom than in a traditional closed campus environment, they should not be out of class without a hall pass. We also updated duties for our academic coaches/teacher assistants so that at least one AC/TA goes to each college class each period to take attendance and make sure students have arrived on time.

VII: Students are missing required credits

Because of the Early College structure for 9th and 10th grades, SECHS students have only six high school credits remaining to graduate: two more years of math, two more years of English, one year of science, and one year of a fine arts class. Using math as an example:

1. Most of our 11th graders this year will take Geometry. Every Tennessee student must take Geometry in high school.
2. In 12th grade, our students will take one math course during first semester and another math course during second semester. That will complete their high school math requirement.
3. The special opportunity SECHS provides is that during these two years, the student not only receives 2 years of high school math credit but also completes at least TWO math requirements on the college level and receives at least 6 transferrable college credits in math! Or, depending on the focus of an Associate's Degree, one math and one elective course. Either way, the student is six credits closer to their 60-credit requirement for an associate degree!

VIII: Classes are being taught out of sequence

This is not the case. If a student does not pass certain classes, with parental permission, he/she can choose to take that class in summer school and continue to stay on track. This, however, is only with parental permission on a case-by-case basis if the teacher agrees.

IX: Students are unable to take credit recovery courses

Southwest Early College High School has provided credit recovery to students since fourth quarter of our first year of operation, 2017-18. Prior to requiring credit recovery:

Parents were communicated with about their students' failing grades by phone calls home by teachers. Students were offered free, after-school and Saturday tutoring to help catch up on missing coursework (which was 98% of the time the reason for failing grades). SECHS matched students with mentors at school who continually encouraged the students to complete their work, held them accountable, and

who made additional phone calls to parents updating them on progress. Most teachers logged their calls in a Google form, and moving forward, all calls to parents are logged.

During Q4 of the 2017-18 school year, students and parents signed an agreement with the prior principal and/or our Director of Instruction, that they would participate in Credit Recovery classes on Saturdays. If they participated each week and completed the required assignments and quizzes, they could receive a passing grade for the semester.

Some students entered 10th grade without having completed credit recovery for their failed subjects. Our principal met with each student and his/her parent(s) to discuss the options of repeating the 9th grade subject or doing credit recovery for the 9th grade subject while maintaining the 10th grade courses. Each family chose the latter option, likely due to the fact that students failed due to not completing required coursework, as opposed to not understanding the course material. This point of view was sustained by teacher comments regarding in-class performance. Students who participated in this credit recovery were communicated with and encouraged at least weekly by our Director of Instruction.

SECHS will not offer credit recovery this next year, as students have the option to take credit recovery offered by the school district each summer. Also, we are implementing mandatory tutoring for any students with less than a 75% in a core subject class or who are missing more than two assignments in any class. This mandatory tutoring will be provided at least one time each week, starting the week of 9/9/19.